

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USNATO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0018

USIA WASHDC

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ATTN: PAOS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: US PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON EUROCOMMUNISM

REF: A) EUR-38 JAN. 12; B) STATE 9439

1. NOTING THAT US STATEMENT ON ITALY (REF A) HAS CAUSED COMMENT IN EUROPEAN MEDIA, SOME OF IT CRITICAL OF ALLEGED US "INTERFERENCE" IN ITALIAN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, WE BELIEVE THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW HOW WE HAVE BEEN HANDLING PRESS QUERIES.

2. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION ON RATIONALE FOR TIMING AND CONTENT OF STATEMENT: CHANGES IN POLITICAL SITUATION IN ITALY, AND USE BEING MADE HERE OF ALLEGED AMBIGUITY OF US POSITION RE GREATER ROLE FOR COMMUNISTS IN GOVERNING ITALY, LED TO RELEASE OF STATEMENT BY DEPARTMENT. DESPITE MISSION EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN LOW PROFILE, ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OTHERS WERE REPRESENTING THIS LOW PROFILE AS AMERICAN INDIFFERENCE TO FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO COMMUNISTS. EVEN FRIENDLY COMMENTATORS WERE REPORTING THAT US LOW PROFILE PERMITTED OUR POSITION TO BE PORTRAYED AS HAVING DEPARTED FROM THE FORMERLY CLEAR U.S. OPPOSITION TO A GREATER PCI ROLE. THIS PERCEIVED AMBIGUITY, ALTHOUGH NOT SUPPORTED BY ANY US STATEMENTS, RISKED

BEING A SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE FACTOR AS ITALIANS, THIS
WINTER, MANEUVERED TO CONSTRUCT A NEW GOVERNING FORMULA.

3. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION OF WHETHER U.S. POLICY HAS
CHANGED: AS EMPHASIZED IN JAN. 12 DEPARTMENT PRESS
BRIEFING (REF. B) AND ANSWERS POSTED LATER BY OFFICE OF PRESS
RELATIONS, STATEMENT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE CHANGE IN US
POSITION. THIS POSITION HAS BEEN STATED FREQUENTLY BY
PRESIDENT, SECSTATE, DR. BRZEZINSKI, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMEN,
AMBASSADOR, EMBASSY OFFICIALS. (FYI: WE HAVE ASSEMBLED SET OF NINE
SUCH STATEMENTS OVER RECENT MONTHS SUPPORTING POINT THAT
POLICY HAS BEEN CONSISTENT. WE HAVE FORWARDED THIS
COLLECTION TO ADDRESSEES.)

4. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION WHETHER STATEMENT CONSTITUTES
INTERFERENCE IN ITALIAN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS: STATEMENT DOES
NOT CONSTITUTE INTERFERENCE IN ITALIAN INTERNAL
POLITICS. IT SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDS TELLING ITALIANS HOW TO
GOVERN OR SUGGESTING A FORMULA WHICH US WOULD PREFER.
STATEMENT SAYS "OUR WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES ARE SOVEREIGN
COUNTRIES AND, RIGHTLY AND PROPERLY, THE DECISION
ON HOW THEY ARE GOVERNED RESTS WITH THEIR CITIZENS
ALONE. AT THE SAME TIME, WE BELIEVE WE HAVE AN
OBLIGATION TO OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES TO EXPRESS
OUR VIEWS CLEARLY." STATEMENT IS SUCH AN EXPRESSION
ON THE POINT OF VIEW OF A TRADITIONAL FRIEND AND ALLY
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OF ITALY. IN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD, WERE DEVELOPMENTS
IN ONE COUNTRY CAN PROFOUNDLY AFFECT INTERESTS OF ITS
ALLIES, THOSE ALLIES HAVE RIGHT TO SPEAK.

5. FOLLOWING RELEASE OF STATEMENT, WE HAVE AVOIDED
EITHER ADDING TO OR SUBTRACTING FROM IT, OR OFFERING
INTERPRETATIONS OF IT. STATEMENT, TOGETHER WITH
SPOKESMEN'S REMARKS, SPEAKS CLEARLY. GARDNER

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